Something Concerning my Convincement OF GOD'S TRUTH, THE Way, Work & Manner thereof.

MANY Years I ſpent in the World, before I was much convinced of the evil of many things I then did; living in *Pride* and *Pleaſure*, and ſatisfying my vain Mind therein, not much ſeeking or deſiring after the things of God, having little of any Form or Profeſſion of Godlineſs, and much leſs of the Power thereof; and herein I may ſtill admire the great Mercy of God, in that he did not cut me off in this time of my Sin and Tranſgreſſion, but gave me time to Repent. And this was my State and Condition for many Years; till about the Year 1655. I begun to take notice of ſome Profeſſors about *Keſwicke* in *Cumberland*; and looking upon them as more like to be the People of God then thoſe I had formerly been

amongſt; I frequented their Meetings, and walked with them after the ſtricteſt manner, for about four Years, in all things pertaining to Religion and Worſhip, as I was then perſwaded; yet towards the latter end of that time, I felt my Spirit much diſſatisfied, as to Religion and Worſhip, in many things which we then practiſed; and the more I thought and pondered in my Mind thereupon, the more did my diſſatisfaction grow upon me, inſomuch that at length I did queſtion both that Miniſtry and Worſhip, which we then owned, whether it was the true Miniſtry and Worſhip or not; and all thoſe our Religious Practices, whether God would accept of them or not; being done, as I then feared, out of that Spirit which gives acceptance with the Lord, and ſo but will-worſhip; and though we had the form of Godlineſs, yet I doubted whether we had the true power or no, being not redeemed out of the Spirit of the World; but ſtill living in the Forms, Faſhions and Cuſtoms thereof, being much perſwaded in my Heart that there was a People nearer the Lord then we were, and did enjoy more of his Power and Preſence then we did; and thus my Heart and Mind did with-draw from that People more and more, and enclined much after them People call'd *Quakers*; and the more I did obſerve and take notice of them, and their Behaviour, Life and Converſation, the more did my Love and good deſires grow and encreaſe unto them; being much perſwaded in my Heart that they were the People of God, though I had little diſcourſe with any of them, or ever been at any of their Meetings; but often when I read the Scriptures, and the Saints Conditions there recorded, I thought in my Heart they were likeſt the People there ſpoken of, and then my Spirit travelled to be with them, though very unwilling to leave thoſe People that I had ſo long been in Fellowſhip with. And thus I travelled under the weight and preſſure of Spirit for many Days, Weeks, Months,

Months, if not Years; sometimes secretly saying in my Heart, I had rather die with this People (meaning the Professors) then leave them, if I could believe that God would accept of what we did, and great was that Love and Affection I had for natural Relations. And this was my State and Condition a long time, being unwilling to give up in answer to Gods requirings, and deny self, and take up the Cross, which made my Travel both longer and harder; which at length the Professors perceiving, & thinking that I was like to leave them, endeavoured to keep me amongst them as long as they could, and did use their best Arguments to that effect; sometimes in Love, and otherwise, in telling what great danger there was in joyning with such a People as were deluded, as they would say; but when they did see that all they could do would not prevail, then they begun to threaten me with Excommunication, telling me of the fearful and horrid Sentence thereof; which afterwards they proceeded unto, pronouncing the Sentence of Excommunication, as they call'd it; [See Mark] this was not done until they were without any hope of my continuing with them, and then they would presume to cast me out from amongst them, when they could keep me no longer; and when *James Cave* their Pastor, so call'd, had pronounced Sentence against me, he spoke to one *Richard Waterson*, call'd a Deacon, to put me forth from amongst them, where they were met, which he did accordingly; but what hath befalnhim since, and for what cause is best known unto the Lord alone: I wish he may be sensible of his own Condition, repent of his Sins, and find Mercy with the Lord: And herein I witness Christs Words fulfilled, *Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall seperate you from their Company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your Names as evil, for the Son of mans sake: Rejoyce you in that day, and leap for Joy, for behold your Reward is great in Heaven, for*

in the like manner did their Fathers unto the Prophets, Luke 6. 22, 23. And how feelingly have I witneſſed that Scripture fulfilled *Iſa.* 66. 5. *Here the Word of the Lord ye that tremble at his Word, your Brethren that hated you, that caſt you out, for my Names ſake, ſaid let the Lord be glorified: but he ſhall appear to your joy, and they ſhall be aſhamed.* And ſure this was my Condition in that day.

Yet after all this, greatly was I exerciſed, being ſeveral times moved to go to their places of Worſhip where *James Cave* was, and that in much weakneſs of Body, having neither eaten Bread, nor any other Food, unleſs a little Water ſometimes, for many days: And at one of their Chappels I did warn *James Cave* not to go away and leave that People which he had profeſſed himſelf Paſtor to, nor when Sufferings were like to come on; laying ſeveral things before him, which might draw him from them, 1ſt. *Fear of Perſecution and Sufferings:* 2dly *Doubting of Maintenance according to his mind:* 3dly *The perſwaſion of natural Friends and Relations, as a Wife and others.* Yet notwithſtanding all this, not long after he went away, and left that People for many Years, whether they would ſtand or fall, and ſoon after they gave over their accuſtomed Meetings, and fell away.

And at another time I declared Chriſts Words to *James Cave*, (in another of their Chappels, before the Auditors) *Mat.* 7. 24, 25, 26, and 27. Speaking of the *Wiſe man that built his Houſe upon a Rock, and the Rain deſcended, and the Floods came, and the Winds blew and beat upon that Houſe, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a Rock: But the fooliſh man built his Houſe upon the Sand, and the Rain deſcended, and the Floods came, and the Winds blew, and beat upon that Houſe, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.* And it is plain and evident what their Building was upon, which if it had been upon a Rock, doubtleſs would have ſtood, but being upon

the

the Sand, is fallen, ruinate, and not visible; therefore let
see what they build upon, for it is that Church built up
the Rock, against which the Gates of Hell do not preva
Glory to our God forever.

But to return again to my own State and Condition: In t
Year 1659. I went first among Friends, and to Friends Me
ings, and though I was much perswaded in my Heart a
Mind of Truths way, and that they were the People
God; yet by being conversant amongst them and freque
in Meetings, I was much confirmed and strengthened in t
former Faith.

And as for my Convincement of Gods Eternal Truth, a
the work and manner thereof, which was much in my H
at the first, this, I say, was a secret, inward and spiritu
Work, wrought upon my Heart and Soul by the effectu
working and operation of the holy Divine Spirit of G
and much without the help of outward means, or outw
instrument, though some did endeavour it; but the wo
was the Lords, and to him alone be the Praise and Glo
forever.

And if I here declare what God hath done for my So
and made me a witness of, both in the time of my Convin
ment, and since, I know it will be hard to be believed
many; but this I may say, oh the travel in Spirit Day a
Night, the many great and weighty Exercises both inward
and outwardly, the Watches, the Fasts for seven Days, for ni
Days, for ten Days, and for fourteen Days, unless only
little Water sometimes; and the last day thereof I travell
five miles to a Meeting, and as far back again that d
on foot, and this was in the Year 1661. besides at ma
other time and times, even such was that great desire
was begotten in my Heart after God, and love to him ab
all natural and visible things, though being at the very po

Death, in my own apprehenſion, and ſcarce diſcerning whe-
er in the Body or out of the Body, my Viſage more altered
en many in that day; inſomuch that ſome of my familiar
quaintance have ſaid, *There's none looks like him*; for indeed
e Lord did chaſten me ſore, though he hath not given me
ver unto Death, but in, and through, and over all hath
iſed me up, and fully ſatisfied my Soul for Religion for ever.

Having often richly partaken of Gods Living Power and
ivine Preſence in our bleſſed Aſſemblies and Meetings, and
many other times, which to me is an evident token that
e God of Heaven is our God, and that we are his People;
r the Pearl of great price hath been found and purchaſed,
ough with the loſs of all, and the Truth bought, which I
pe, can never be ſold, nor parted with for all the Worlds
reaſures, Delights and Pleaſures; and now after all thoſe
owful Days, and mournful Nights, great is that Peace
d Comfort that is enjoyed by many in the Lord. And as
itherto a faithful Teſtimony hath been born for God and
is Truth, ſo it is my Belief and Confidence, that in the
rength of the Lord, I ſhall continue unto the end, waiting
Faith and Patience for that bleſſed Reward of an eternal
d everlaſting Inheritance of reſt and Peace with God the
ather, and his eternal Son Jeſus Chriſt, and that for evermore.

And now God Almighty, for the continuance of thy Love
nd Goodneſs, which thou haſt made my Soul ſenſible of,
nd in that thou haſt made me any way ſerviceable in thy
hurch, and amongſt thy People, now in the declining time
f my Age, and when my Eyes are growing dim; oh how
ſt thou hereby engaged my Heart, Soul and Spirit to Bleſs
nd praiſe thy great and holy Name.

And

And oh thou Living and Eternal God, as hitherto thou hast made me ſenſible of thy great Power, and admirable wonderful Works; oh do thou evermore keep me; keep me that my Heart and Spirit may never withdraw nor depart from thee; but keep me, keep me, near and cloſe unto thee even unto the end, that I may Bleſs, and Praiſe and Magnifie thy great and holy Name, both now and forever, and for evermore, Amen.

From one who hath rather choſen to ſuffer Affliction with the People of God, then enjoy the pleaſures of Sin for a ſeaſon.

From *Dailehead* near *Keſwicke* in *Cumberland*, the 18th 10th Month, 1660.

Thomas Lay[illegible]

THE END.